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COUNTRY

Rumania

REPORT

SUBJECT

Soviet Troops in the Timisoara Area

DATE DISTR.

27 January 1959

NO. OF PAGES

1

DATE OF INFO.

REQUIREMENT NO.

RD

PLACE ACQUIRED

REFERENCES

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report on Soviet troops in the

Timisoara area.

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1. Soviet troops entered Timisoara during the period late 1948 to early 1949, and remained until early 1951 when they were all evacuated. However, they returned in greater force in 1952, to stay at least until late June 1958. Although other Soviet units in Rumania relieved local units numerous times, there was only one occasion when a unit moved in directly from the USSR to replace a unit in Timisoara. During the Hungarian revolt the entire Soviet garrison was sent to Hungary.
2. In late May 1958 all Soviet staff officers in Timisoara participated in a meeting in Constanta, the headquarters for Soviet

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forces in Rumania. It was rumored that a general evacuation order was issued at the meeting; two or three days after the return of the officers preparations for the transfer of material and installations to the Rumanian Army, a preliminary to the evacuation of Soviet troops, were undertaken. During June 1958 construction material, such as timber and iron, from Soviet stores in Rumania was shipped to Hungary; orders were issued to dispatch five freight cars loaded with timber and an equal number with firewood daily. Firewood was loaded about 500 meters from the central railroad station, while general cargo was loaded on Gheorghe Lazar Street extended, on the road to Sacalaz. On 16 June 1958 the Soviets, together with Rumanian military counterparts, began to take inventory of installations in preparation for their return to Rumanian forces. Included in the buildings returned on paper were residential houses requisitioned by the Soviet army and certain structures among the barracks which were empty and unused.

3. Soviet troops in Arad, Radna, and Lipova were subordinate to the Soviet garrison in Timisoara. No data ^{are} ~~is~~ available about the strength of Soviet troops in the Timisoara area or elsewhere.
4. Soviet headquarters in Timisoara were located on Piata Libertatii, opposite the former city hall and near the opera, in a three-

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story building which had formerly served as a Rumanian officers' club. A general who had several colonels on his staff commanded the headquarters.

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5. The following units in Timisoara were subordinate to the headquarters:

- a. A mechanized infantry regiment (polk), which was stationed in former Rumanian army barracks on Oituz Street, near Piata Unirei. The compound was approximately 150 meters long and included two two-story stone houses, a soldiers' club, a canteen, supply and arms stores, and small administrative buildings. The unit, which was commanded by a colonel, had at its disposal Molotov and Zis trucks, painted the standard Soviet olive green.
- b. An artillery regiment was stationed in prewar Rumanian army barracks on the left-hand side of Calea Aradului coming from town, opposite the regional broadcasting station. The Soviet army added several new buildings to the existing U-shaped barracks, including one large two-story structure. The unit, commanded by a colonel, had various types of guns and used Zis and Molotov trucks. Heavy equipment was kept in garages of wood and stone and could not be discerned from outside the compound.

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c. An armored regiment was stationed in old Rumanian barracks and newer Soviet structures 100 meters off the road to Arad on the outskirts of Timisoara. The compound was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. The unit was directly administered by the Timisoara town command, since it was small and, unlike the units mentioned above, did not have a senior administrative officer. A new shed on the compound served as a field workshop for light repairs and maintenance of the vehicles; heavy tank repairs were carried out by a special workshop in the Floesti region.

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d. A transport battalion (avtomobilniy batalyon) was stationed in the northern part of the town, between the roads leading to Lipova and Arad. A dirt road connected the barracks with both highways. The unit occupied former Rumanian barracks, one-story stone buildings, to which the Soviets had added wooden huts, and sheds measuring 12 x 56 x 4 meters for vehicles. Each shed contained 30 to 40 Zis and Molotov (two to four ton) trucks. Most of the vehicles were of the 4 x 2 type in general use by the Soviets in the area, but some of the new, and predominantly four-wheeled, trucks were reserved for

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emergency use. The unit, which was commanded by a lieutenant colonel, was principally composed of drivers and mechanics. It had a field workshop which carried out all repairs, with the exception of general overhauls.

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- e. A driving school (avtoshkola) for the transport battalion was located in the two-story building of a former building technicians school on Petre Carol (formerly Sergeant Musat) Street, at the corner of Piata Unirei. In 1957 the Rumanian institution, which was under the district government building corporation, returned to the premises.
- f. A small air force unit was stationed at the Timisoara military airfield near Remetea. A major commanded the unit.
- g. A signals battalion (batalyon svyazi) was billeted in a large two-story building on Piata Lahovari, at the corner of Lahovari and Mihai Viteazul Streets, which had formerly been at the disposal of the Hungarian Church. This unit served the entire Timisoara garrison and also maintained the special Soviet army telephone line which connected Timisoara with Constanta. The telephone network between the Soviet army units was

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quite separate from the civilian installations; its cables were laid on housetops and trees rather than telephone poles.

- h. A counterespionage (kontrrazvedka) unit of the Soviet army was billeted in a one-story former private house at 55 (?) Calea Eroilor Dala Stalingrad (formerly Tache Ionescu Street), on the left-hand side of the street coming from Piata Unirei. The personnel of the unit, which was under a colonel, usually wore civilian clothes.
- i. The Soviet town major's and military prosecutor's office in Timisoara was in a one-story building on Diaconul Sloza Street near the Maxim Gorki Cinema (formerly Capitol).
- j. Warehouses for Soviet army rations were located on the extension of Gheorghe Lazar Street, on the road to Sacalaz. A special railroad spur connected the central station to the depot, where all types of equipment for Soviet troops (arriving in Rumanian freight cars by way of ^{UNGHEM} Hungary, the route for all equipment and supplies for the Soviet garrison in Timisoara) were unloaded.
- k. Fuel stores were located in the northern part of the town on Calea Aradului, on the left-hand side of the

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street coming from the town center, just before the Romanian army barracks. There were also gas stations for Soviet units throughout the town.

1. A 25-bed dispensary for the Timisoara garrison was located at 181 (?), Tudor Vladimirescu Street, on the right-hand side of the street coming from the central railroad station, near the Bega Canal. Serious cases were sent to a larger Soviet army hospital in Arad.
- m. The Timisoara broadcasting station had a special section where only Soviet army personnel were employed in unspecified functions. The existence of a Soviet jamming station is not confirmed, but Russian language broadcasts from the West were received with great difficulty.
6. Soviet officers in Timisoara were billeted outside the barracks in nationalized residential buildings. About 200 buildings with 10 to 12 apartments each are known to have served as quarters for married men. They were concentrated on Paris and Elena Pavel Streets. Unmarried officers lived at the Hotel Savoy on Strada Garai.

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9. Signals security among Soviet units was safeguarded by code designations which were exchanged at certain intervals. Unit commanders and the Timisoara Soviet telephone exchange had a list of the designations. It was kept secret and communication was only possible through the unit commander, who personally requested the second party by its code name from the telephone exchange.
10. Until about 1956 contact between Soviet troops and the civilian population was strictly forbidden; Soviet soldiers attended

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their own cinemas, for example, and lived separately from the townspeople. Subsequent to 1956 there was some relaxation and Soviet soldiers began visiting Rumanian cinemas and dating Rumanian girls. However, they were still not permitted to enter Rumanian restaurants. The population was cool toward them, especially people of Hungarian extraction who had passively hated them since the Hungarian revolt. Among the Soviet soldiers attitudes towards the local population varied, but in general they felt uncomfortable, and suffered from isolation and the language barrier.

11. All Soviet officers were permitted to wear mufti on weekends, and some personnel on special duty wore civilian clothes all the time. There were also many Soviet civilians working for various organizations and the population had the impression that the Soviets were "disguising" themselves in civilian clothes in order to remain in Rumania, although ostensibly the military were officially leaving the country.
12. A pay unit, a branch of the Soviet State Bank, made purchases for the Soviet forces and also paid the soldiers and the wages of civilian employed by the Soviets. This unit was commanded by a major.

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13. The following Soviet officers in Timisoara are known:

- a. General Abatulov (fnu), [redacted] was the commander of the Timisoara garrison prior to the Hungarian rebellion. [redacted]
- b. Colonel Bandurin (fnu) is the garrison's intelligence officer. [redacted]
- c. Lt. Colonel Belikov (fnu) is the town major of Timisoara and the military prosecutor for the region. [redacted]
- d. Colonel Bondarenko (fnu) is the chief of the political section of the garrison headquarters. [redacted]
- e. Colonel Davidov (fnu) [redacted] is in charge of financial affairs.
- f. Lt. Colonel Nikulin (fnu) is the administrative officer of the infantry unit in Timisoara. [redacted]
- g. Colonel Orekhov (fnu), who was formerly Abatulov's deputy, has been the commander of the Timisoara garrison since

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h. Major Pavlov (fnu) is the commander of the signals battalion in Timisoara.

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i. Colonel Shakhov (fnu) is the chief technical officer of the garrison.

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j. Colonel Stepantsev (fnu) is the chief administrative officer of the garrison.

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(fnu)
k. Tereschenko, [redacted]
[redacted] is the administrative officer of the local artillery regiment.

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l. Colonel Tulov (fnu) is the chief quartermaster officer of the Timisoara garrison.

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m. Lt. Colonel Turik (fnu), [redacted]
[redacted] is the commander of the transport battalion in Timisoara.

14. Attached for your information and action is a sketch showing the location of some Soviet military installations in Timisoara.

Legend to Sketch

1. Mechanized infantry regiment.
2. Artillery regiment.
3. Armored regiment.
4. Transport regiment.
5. Driving school.
6. Signals battalion.
7. Field security unit.
8. Ration stores.
9. Fuel stores.
10. Broadcasting station.
11. Timisoara garrison headquarters.
12. Rumanian army barracks.
13. Eastern section of the central railroad station (where the tracks enter the station).
14. Rumanian army barracks.

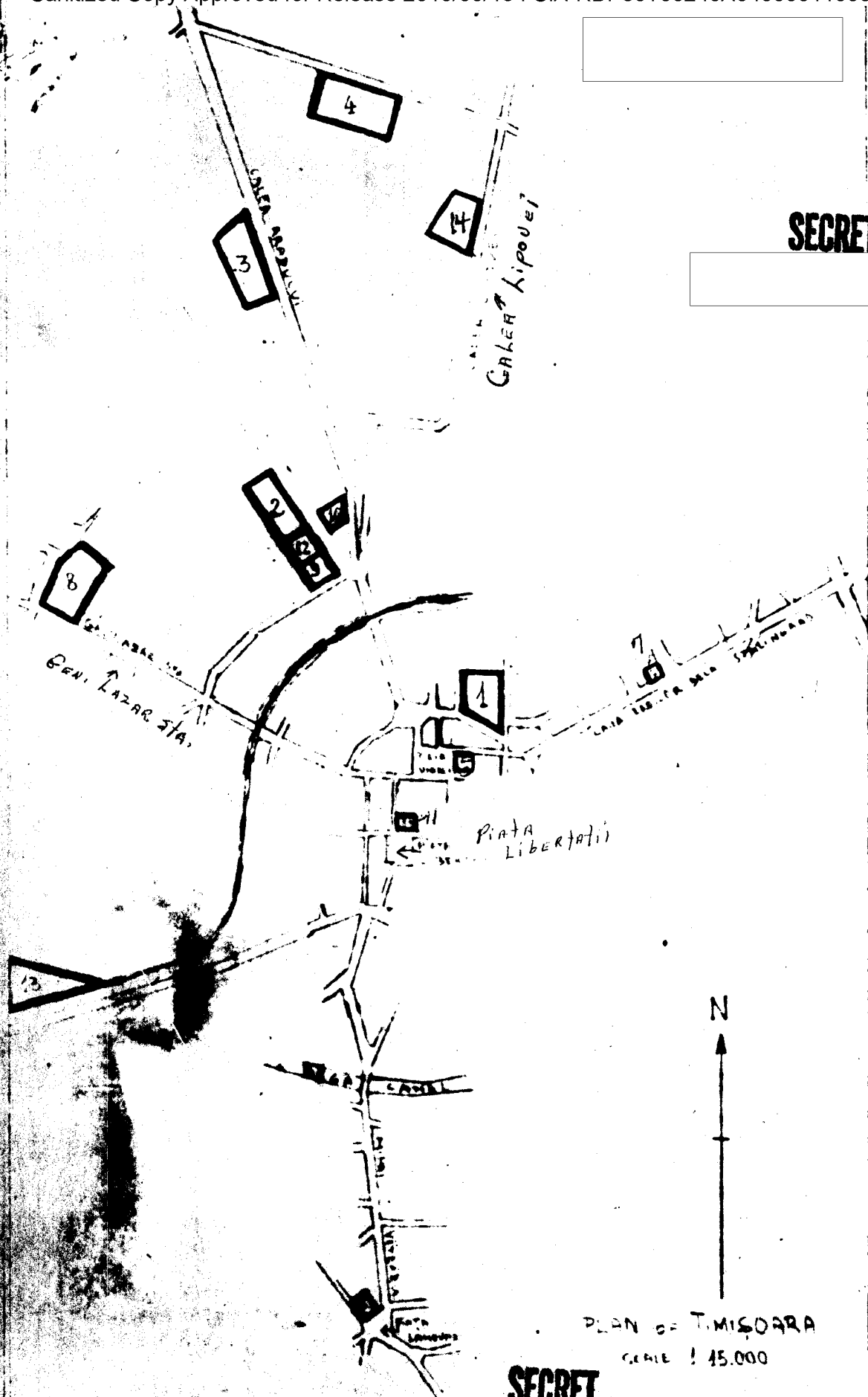
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